

Amendments

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1 and 15 as follows:

Sub B1
21

1. (Amended) A method of confining a commodity in a composite container having a plurality of constituents, comprising the steps of:

assembling the constituents into the composite container around the commodity;

providing at least some of the constituents with characteristic indicia not later than in the course of the assembling step;

processing the characteristic indicia into information which is characteristic of the assembled container; and

encoding the information upon at least one constituent of the container.

Sub 22
22

15. (Amended) Apparatus for confining successive ones of a series of commodities in composite containers each of which has a set of constituents, comprising:

means for conveying successive commodities of the series along a predetermined path;

means for assembling the constituents of the sets into the containers, including placing the constituents around successive commodities in a predetermined sequence in successive portions of the path;

means for providing at least some constituents of each set with characteristic indicia not later than in the respective portions of said path;

Applicants: Bismarck et al.
Appl. No. 09/769,289

12
contd.

means for processing the characteristic indicia on said at least some constituents of each
set into information which is characteristic of the respective assembled containers; and
means for encoding the information upon the respective containers.
